

Dear XXXXXXXXXXXX:

I would like to thank you for your generous support of research at the Relativistic Heavy Ion Collider (RHIC), this country's flagship nuclear physics facility, and to share with you the enclosed reprint of the cover article from the May 2006 issue of *Scientific American*.

Since 2000, RHIC has been performing beyond expectations, giving me and other physicists around the world a "golden opportunity," as *Scientific American* puts it, to explore the most fundamental forces and properties of matter and the conditions of the early universe.

Discoveries at RHIC have captured worldwide attention and shone a spotlight on U.S. leadership in science. Our stunning announcement in April 2005 that the early-universe matter we are creating at RHIC behaves more like a liquid than a gas has enriched our understanding of quantum chromodynamics (QCD) — the theory that describes the interactions of the smallest known components of the atomic nucleus. RHIC's surprising findings are also a resounding endorsement of the value of experimental facilities for testing and strengthening our understanding of the world both within and around us.

I hope that you will take the time to read the enclosed article, which eloquently describes the historical context and scientific justification for these explorations, as well as the mysteries we still hope to explore.

Thank you again for your continuing support.

Sincerely,